

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated October 5, 2004. Claims 1-47 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-47 have been rejected. Claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40 have been amended to further define the scope and novelty of the present invention. Support for the amendments to the claims is found throughout the specification, and in particular, in Figure 3 and on page 6, line 8-21. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been presented. Accordingly, claims 1-47 remain pending. For the reasons set forth more fully below, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are allowable. Consequently, reconsideration, allowance, and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has stated:

Claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-17, 19-22, 24-28 and 30-47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Matsuda et al. (US Patent 2002/0020959).

Regarding claims 1, 10, 20, 32, 33, 34, 40-42, 46 and 47, Matsuda et al. teaches an apparatus and method comprising a document feeder device comprising a frame (5) and at least one cantilevered roller shaft (shaft supporting feed roller 3, Page 3, paragraph 0050) comprises a distal end and a proximal end for advancing a document, and wherein the proximal end is coupled to the frame of such that the distal end floats (As shown in Figure 2). ...

Applicants respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's rejections. The present invention provides a document feeder device. The document feeder device includes a frame and at least one cantilevered roller shaft for advancing a document, where an unsupported end of the at least one cantilevered roller shaft floats. The document feeder device eliminates the need for a rigid frame to support the unsupported end. This decreases the cost of production by eliminating the

need for additional frame hardware and/or more rigid frame hardware. (Abstract.) Matsuda does not teach or suggest these features, as discussed below.

Matsuda discloses an apparatus for feeding sheets between a feed roller and a separating member pressed into contact with the feed roller. The apparatus separates and conveys sheet media held between the feed roller and the separating member by utilizing differences in frictional coefficients between the feed roller, the separating member, and the sheet media. The sheet media are separated and conveyed while periodically changing the pressurizing force of the reverse roller against the feed roller. (Abstract.)

However, Matsuda does not teach or suggest the at least one cantilevered roller shaft, “wherein the at least one cantilevered roller shaft is supported **only at one end**,” as recited in amended independent claim 1. Instead, Matsuda teaches a shaft that is supported at one end and supported between the middle and the other end of the shaft (Figure 2 and paragraphs 0052 to 0054). Referring to Figure 3 of the present invention, only one end 107 of the at least one cantilevered roller shaft 106 is supported. As such, the rest of the at least one cantilevered roller shaft floats. This allows a sheet 104 that is wider than the printer to pass through the printer. In contrast to the present invention, referring to Figure 2 of Matsuda, because the shaft 7 is not supported only at one end, a sheet that is wider than the printer cannot pass through the printer. This is because the main body frame 5, which supports the shaft 7 at one end, and the side plate 9, which supports the shaft 7 at the other end, would be in the way.

Therefore, Matsuda does not teach or suggest the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1 and this claim is allowable over Matsuda.

Independent claims 10, 20, 32, and 40

Similar to amended independent claim 1, amended independent claims 10 and 20 recite a cantilevered roller shaft having a distal end and a proximal end, “wherein only the proximal end is coupled to the frame such that the distal end floats.” Similarly, amended independent claim 32 recites “coupling only a supported end of the at least one cantilevered roller shaft.” Similarly, amended independent claim 40 recites “coupling only the proximal end to a frame of the printer such that the distal end floats.” As described above, with respect to amended independent claim 1, Matsuda does not teach or suggest these features. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to amended independent claim 1 apply with equal force to claims 10, 20, 32, and 40. Therefore, claims 10, 20, 32, and 40 are allowable over Matsuda for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has stated:

Claims 4, 13, 18, 23, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuda et al. (US Patent 2002/0020959) in view of Applicant Admitted Prior Art (“AAPA”)

Matsuda et al. teaches the claimed apparatus and method with the exception of a frame comprising a main portion and front portion. AAPA teaches a printer with a front portion (54) and a main portion (56, Page 2, Lines 15-16 and Figure 2). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention as taught by Matsuda et al. to include a main portion and front portion of a printer as taught by AAPA, since AAPA teaches that it is advantageous to provide a stable and a reliable feeding device.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s rejections. Dependent claims 4, 13, 18, 23, and 29 depend from independent claims 1, 10, and 20, respectively. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to amended independent claim 1, 10, and 20 apply with equal force

to claims 4, 13, 18, 23, and 29, which are thus allowable over the cited reference for at least the same reasons as claims 1, 10, and 20.

Remaining dependent claims

Dependent claims 2-3, 5-9, 11-12, 14-17, 19, 21-22, 24-28, 30-31, 33-39, and 41-47 depend from amended independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40, respectively. Accordingly, the above-articulated arguments related to amended independent claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40 apply with equal force to claims 2-3, 5-9, 11-12, 14-17, 19, 21-22, 24-28, 30-31, 33-39, and 41-47, which are thus allowable over the cited reference for at least the same reasons as claims 1, 10, 20, 32, and 40.

Conclusion

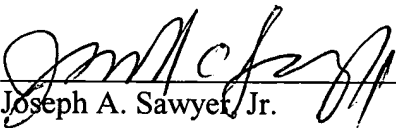
In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-47 are patentable over the cited references. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims as now presented.

Applicants' attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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December 28, 2004
Date



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